



Bob Brind-Surch Natures Photos



Natures Photos

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British Wildlife Workshop

Photographing native British wildlife in a natural setting is the dream and goal of many a wildlife photographer. You may have had that wonderful fleeting glimpse of a fox or roe deer or maybe even the delightful small hedgerow carnivores such as a weasel or stoat. Maybe you have seen a badger crossing the road late at night but who has seen an otter swimming across a river or a polecat amongst a pile of rocks. These are all well-known animals of the British countryside, probably from our childhood books on nature study, but seeing and then photographing them is very different matter. As a wildlife photographer I have spent many years and many hours watching and waiting for these creatures but after 40 years probably have less than 100 really good photos of British wildlife.

This workshop is based at an amazing location in Surrey only 45 minutes south of London and offers some of the very best opportunities for photographing these charming but elusive creatures. The centre has been especially created with the animals housed in large enclosures designed specifically for photographers and landscaped to provide a perfect backdrop for these our native species.

The centre is normally only open to the public on bank holidays and at weekends, and then only provides limited access to the animals. We will have the centre to ourselves and privileged access right into the pens with some of the animals so there will be no barriers or wire obscuring your view! You will come home with stunning photographs that would be extremely difficult or impossible in the wild, you will have improved your photographic technique and at the same time learnt a great deal



more about your camera and the wildlife. This is a workshop not to be missed.

Animals available at the centre include foxes, otters and wild cats - you will be able to enter all these enclosures for stunning photographs. You will photograph stoats, weasels, polecats, mink all in enclosures carefully landscaped to provide natural settings with logs, water and appropriate undergrowth. Other





animals available for you to photograph, also in naturally landscaped enclosures, include badgers, roe deer, red deer, muntjac deer, snakes, water voles, frogs and more. This is a truly magnificent centre which provides unrivalled photo opportunities.

There are many stars and star attractions but the foxes often rank highest on visitors reviews. Their enclosure has been carefully constructed and houses a natural den in the side of a bank. This makes for a fantastic semi natural setting with grasses, shrubbery and even

hawthorn bushes. You will want to spend a long time with these stars but will be torn by the equally attractive stoats and weasels in their natural enclosures, the otters being fed in their natural pond or the wildcats with their dens amongst fallen trees and bracken. You need to leave time for the red squirrels, water voles, muntjac and roe, fallow and red deer plus of course the smaller mammals in equally well landscaped indoor enclosures. This will be a very full day requiring plenty of memory cards!

Successful wildlife photography usually requires very long lenses, camouflaged clothes and hides. At this location however, whilst a 300 or 400mm lens will provide those head filling shots of otters, stoats and weasels, shorter lenses are all that is required for most of the animals. You might even require a wide angle lens when photographing the resident vixen who often approaches so close she will tug on your shoe laces. A DSLR will undoubtedly give you the greatest flexibility but a bridge camera will be more than adequate in most situations. If however you want to use this as an opportunity to try out a new camera or special lens I have an arrangement with an excellent lens hire firm who can provide certain camera bodies and lenses on very cost effective hire for the day. Please enquire beforehand and I will provide all the necessary information.

As your wildlife photography guide I will lead the workshop and provide all the necessary photographic guidance and training. This workshop is designed specifically for the enthusiastic photographers with a real interest in photographing wildlife. My aim on this and all my courses and tours is quite simple, to help you master many of the field techniques required of a competent wildlife photographer and to come away having improved your technique, your knowledge of the subjects and with some memorable images.

The extremely knowledgeable keepers from the centre will be available all day and will be more than happy to answer any questions you have about the animals, their requirements, ecology, breeding habits, distribution or any other aspect of their lives.

The workshop will last 5 to 6 hours, from 10:00 till around 4:30 with a 1 hour break for a sandwich lunch (provided) during which you are more than welcome to continue taking photos if you wish. There will also be a non-compulsory break mid-



afternoon for a cup of tea or coffee.

We will start the workshop with an introduction from the staff at the centre and a briefing from me on the programme for the day including any fixed points e.g. feeding times - animals as well as photographers! I will give as much or as little group photographic tuition as required but my experience on workshops such as this is that guests prefer tuition in small groups focused on photographing a particular animal or specialist camera technique. I will however try to be as flexible as possible.



Whilst the centre houses a massive range of animals in large enclosures it manages to remain reasonably compact and whilst there is a little walking between pens it ought not to be too taxing. The site is accessed via good pathways and disabled parking facilities are available close to the visitor building entrance. Most of the enclosures are reached over gravel paths but it should be noted that access 'inside' the enclosures would be difficult for wheelchair users because of narrow doorways and rough ground. Wheelchair users or those guests with specific needs are

advised to contact us before booking and we will do our very best to accommodate you.

Hot drinks will be available throughout the day and a sandwich lunch will be provided free of charge around 1:00. It won't be possible however to cater for individual dietary requirements so please bring any special food you might require.

Toilet facilities are provided at the base which will never be far from the locations we will be using.

Power is available at the centre for charging laptops and camera batteries and this will be available all day if required but you would be well advised to bring enough batteries to save interrupting your photography. This will be an intensive workshop so also bring plenty of memory cards and expect to take home lots of great images.

All costs, dates and availability are advertised on my website, www.naturesphotos.co.uk, and other dates may be available if groups wanted to book them. Please contact me for further information.

The charge for the day includes tea/coffee on arrival, sandwich lunch, full photographic tuition and venue guides plus entrance to the venue

To book places or for more information please visit my website www.naturesphotos.co.uk and follow links to UK workshops or contact me direct:

Bob Brind-Surch on 01536 373977 or
07983 427202 (preferred)

or email bob@naturesphotos.co.uk





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